

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows (*a clean s t of all p nding claims is presented for the Examiner's convenience*):

1.(Amended) A power supply apparatus for supplying electric power to a substrate carrier container having a rechargeable cell, said power supply apparatus comprising:

a body for seating a substrate carrier container thereon;

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a seating detecting device provided on said body, for detecting whether or not the substrate carrier container is seated on said body;

a movable power supply connector provided on said body; and

a control mechanism for bringing said power supply connector into contact with a charging terminal of the substrate carrier container to charge the rechargeable cell in the substrate carrier container in accordance with a detected signal from said seating detecting device.

2. A power supply apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said substrate carrier container has at least one of an air cleaner and a dehumidifying device disposed therein.

3. A power supply apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said seating detecting device comprises at least one of a mechanical switch, a proximity switch, and a photoelectric sensor.

4. (Amended) A power supply apparatus for supplying electric power to a substrate carrier container having an electrical component energized by an external power source, said power supply apparatus comprising:

a body for seating a substrate carrier container thereon;

a seating detecting device provided on said body, for detecting whether or not the substrate carrier container is seated on said body;

a movable power supply connector provided on said body; and

a control mechanism for bringing said power supply connector into contact with a power supply terminal of the substrate carrier container to supply electric power to the electrical component in accordance with a detected signal from said seating detecting device.

5. (Amended) A power supply apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the substrate carrier container has at least one of an air cleaner and a dehumidifier disposed therein.

6. A power supply apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said seating detecting device comprises at least one of a mechanical switch, a proximity switch, and a photoelectric sensor.

7. (Amended) A method of supplying electric power to a substrate carrier container having a rechargeable cell, said method comprising:

seating a substrate carrier container on a body of a power supply apparatus;

detecting whether or not said substrate carrier container is seated on said body with a seating detecting device provided on the body;

moving a power supply connector provided on said body so as to bring said power supply connector into contact with a charging terminal of said substrate carrier container;

charging said rechargeable cell in said substrate carrier container in accordance with a detected signal from said seating detecting device; and

returning said power supply connector to an original position thereof after said rechargeable cell is charged.

8.(Amended) A method of supplying electric power to a substrate carrier container having an electrical component energized by an external power source, said method comprising:

seating a substrate carrier container on a body of a power supply
apparatus;

detecting whether or not said substrate carrier container is seated on
said body with a seating detecting device provided on the body;

moving a power supply connector, provided on said body, to bring said
power supply connector into contact with a power supply terminal of said substrate carrier
container;

supplying electric power to said electrical component according to a
detected signal from said seating detecting device; and

returning said power supply connector to an original position thereof
after the electric power is supplied to said electrical component.
